STANDARD FORM NO. 11
APPROVED BY THE PRESIDENT
MARCH 10, 1926

TELEGRAM

OFFICIAL BUSINESS—GOVERNMENT RATES

FROM

RECEIVED

BUREAU

CHG. APPROPRIATION APR 24 22 39 56

MESSAGE CENTER

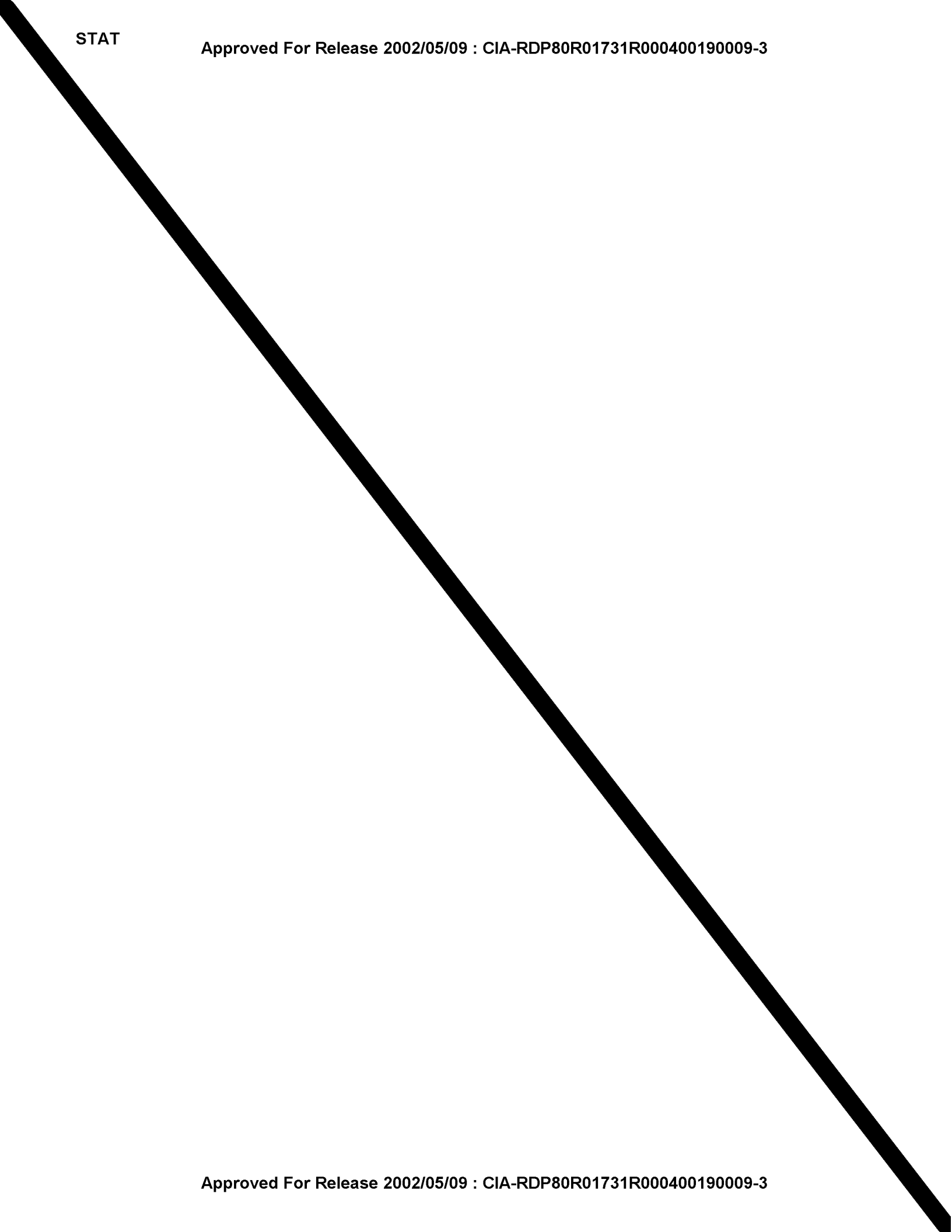
U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 10—1723

OUT91079

Hon. Robert Cutler
Chairman Old Colony Trust Co.
1 Federal Street
Boston, Mass.

Deeply distressed to learn of your brother's death. Sincere sympathy.

Allen W. Dulles



Approved For Release 2002/05/09 : CIA-RDP80R01731R000400190009-3

ER 8-1219/A

11 APR 1956

cc: l

Hon. Robert Cutler
Chairman
Old Colony Trust Company
One Federal Street
Boston 6, Massachusetts

Dear Bobby:

Many thanks for your note of 2 April enclosing your article, "The Development of the National Security Council," which I have read with a great deal of interest.

Sincerely,

SIGNED

Allen W. Dulles
Director

STAT

O/DCI/[redacted] (6 Apr 56)

"P.S. I am planning to send copies of this to all our stations abroad.
AWD"

Distribution:
1 DCI
1 - ER w/basic — Orig addressee
1 - Reading
1 - JMC chrono

ILLEGIB

ORIGINAL CL... 235979
DE... X 2011
EXT... Same
REAS... 3d(3)

C

9 April 56

C"

Worthy of Your Trust

OLD COLONY TRUST COMPANY

ONE FEDERAL STREET, BOSTON 6, MASSACHUSETTS

ROBERT CUTLER
CHAIRMAN

April 2, 1956

Dear Allen

I wanted you to have my article, "The Development of the National Security Council," reprinted from the April issue of FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

Bobby

25

Approved For Release 2002/05/09 : CIA-RDP80R01731R000400190009-3

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

By ROBERT CUTLER

Reprinted from
FOREIGN AFFAIRS
An American Quarterly Review

April 1956

Approved For Release 2002/05/09 : CIA-RDP80R01731R000400190009-3

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

AN AMERICAN QUARTERLY REVIEW

APRIL 1956

58 East 68th Street • New York 21, N. Y.
Subscriptions, $6.00 a year, post free to any address.

Approved For Release 2002/05/09 : CIA-RDP80R01731R000400190009-3

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

By Robert Cutler

DURING the Eisenhower Administration, the National Security Council has emerged as a mechanism of the executive branch of the federal government for advising the President on matters of high policy, equal in importance to the Cabinet. The solid establishment and effective functioning of this relatively new organ at the apex of government is a current phenomenon of America's political economy.

The National Security Council was created by the National Security Act of 1947 and first began to function in late September 1947. An account of its origin, characteristics, composition and current rôle has recently been given by Dillon Anderson, Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs.[1] Because it is Mr. Anderson's function to operate the Council mechanism for the President—as it was mine before his day—he is particularly qualified to tell that story. While it is not here necessary to repeat all that is there so clearly set forth, it will be desirable at the outset to summarize certain essential aspects of the National Security Council.

The Council, unlike the Cabinet, had from its birth the legislative sanction of an Act of Congress. Under its statutory charter, the Council is concerned only in policy matters affecting the security of the nation. The Cabinet, by reasonable accommodation, handles other vast policy areas such as Agriculture, Labor, Post Office, Interior, Health, Education and Welfare, Civil Service, much of Justice and Commerce, and so forth. The Council's purpose is to integrate the manifold aspects of national security policy (such as foreign, military, economic, fiscal, internal security, psychological) to the end that security policies finally recommended to the President shall be both representative and fused, rather than compartmentalized and several. The Council's rôle is advisory only. It recommends; it does not decide. Whatever security policy may be finally approved by the President, after such modifications or rejections of the Council's views as he may determine, is the policy, not of the Council, but of the Chief Executive.

[1] "The President and National Security," *The Atlantic,* January 1956.

The individuals who now regularly attend Council meetings and who come as ad hoc participants for particular items on the agenda are those to whom—because of their offices, knowledge and capacity to contribute—the President would be most likely to turn for advice in the field of national security. The Chairman of the Council, President Eisenhower, has made it clear that he regards the Council as a "corporate body," consisting of officials who are advising the President in their own right and not simply as the heads of their respective departments. And he expects the Council members to "seek, with their background and experience, the most statesmanlike answer to the problems of national security, rather than to attempt solutions which represent a mere compromise of agency positions."

Statistics are not, of course, a criterion of value, but they provide a useful quantitative measure. As of January 20, 1956, the National Security Council had been in existence a little over eight and one-quarter years. During this period the Council held 273 meetings and at them took 1,508 separate policy actions. Of these totals, 128 of the meetings were held and 699 of the policy actions were taken in the five and one-quarter years of the Truman Administration and 145 of the meetings and 809 of the policy actions were recorded in the three years of the Eisenhower Administration.

To illustrate a point which is made later on, let me add one more statistic. The Eisenhower Administration on January 20, 1956, completed 156 weeks in office. During its first 115 weeks, the Council met 115 times (compared with 82 Cabinet meetings for the same period). In the 41 following weeks—which included, of course, the long period of the President's absence in Denver and his subsequent stay in Gettysburg—the Council met 30 times (in comparison with 27 Cabinet meetings for the same period).

These figures point up certain things that must be understood if one is to appreciate the operation of the National Security Council mechanism.

Fundamentally, the Council is a vehicle for a President to use in accordance with its suitability to his plan for conducting his great office. The Congress provided the vehicle, but it is in the President's discretion to do with it what he wishes.

The National Security Act of 1947 not only defines purposes and functions of the Council; it also designates certain persons who will be members of the Council—the President, the Vice

President, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Director of the Office of Defense Mobilization. There is serious doubt in some minds, certainly in mine, whether Congress has the Constitutional power to direct or require the Chief Executive to take counsel with particular advisers in reaching decisions on particular subjects. But this Constitutional question has never been pressed. Each President to whom the Council vehicle has been available has found it useful and convenient.

Mr. Truman and General Eisenhower availed themselves of its convenience in very different ways. But a peculiar virtue of the National Security Act is its flexibility. Within the Act's broad, far-sighted bounds, each President may use the Council as *he* finds most suitable at a given time. There was not intended, nor can there be deduced, any invidious comparison by stating the comparative statistics given above. On the contrary, the comparison illustrates the Act's flexibility.

During the 1952 election campaign, General Eisenhower referred in two major speeches to the National Security Council. He proposed, when elected, to give vital significance to its operations, to use it as a principal mechanism for aiding the Chief Executive in making decisions on matters of high and necessarily secret policy. Candidate Eisenhower looked forward to a Council which would be a continuous, positive and generating force.

When he became President, General Eisenhower transformed the Council into a forum for vigorous discussion against a background of painstakingly prepared and carefully studied papers. He likes nothing better than the flashing interchange of views among his principal advisers. Out of the grinding of these minds comes a refinement of the raw material into valuable metal; out of the frank assertion of differing views, backed up by preparation that searches every nook and cranny, emerges a resolution that reasonable men can support. Differences of views which have developed at lower levels are not swept under the rug, but exposed. In fact, it is the particular task of the Special Assistant to the President to sharpen and make more precise and provocative any divergences that may exist so that the pros and cons can be accurately discussed and explored before the President at the Council meeting. In devising policy under our democratic form of government, reasonable accommodation may be required, but never soft compromise.

Vigor characterizes the exchange of views at the Council table.

But there has not cropped up from such vigor any wrangling or bitterness or hurt pride at failure of a certain view to prevail. The fair, sensible temper of the Chairman, his obvious and sincere search for constructive interchanges, invest the meetings with a high quality. In such a climate, little or selfish advocacies seem out of place.

President Eisenhower is at home in this kind of operation. The old soldier is accustomed to well-staffed work. While I was Special Assistant, 95 percent of the matters to be considered by the Council at its weekly meetings were presented orally or visually on the basis of previously-circulated papers, the substance of which had been thrashed out at the next highest level over weeks, sometimes even months, of preparation. The Special Assistant acts as Chairman of the Council's Planning Board, upon which each Council member is represented at Assistant Secretary level and through which at its meetings three times a week passes all material to be considered by the Council. In the acid bath of the Planning Board, all points of view are represented, heard, explored and contested. There is in this process a guarantee against *ex parte* judgments, against imprecise guidance to the Chief Executive and against suppression of conflicting views.

Like every human instrumentality, the performance of the Planning Board depends upon its members' capabilities, their intellectual fibre and their willingness to work long, hard hours day after day. Each member is nominated by the department or agency head, and, when approved by the Special Assistant, is appointed by the President himself. The higher the calibre and quality of the men in the Planning Board, the better integrated are the ideas and the more succinctly and revealingly stated are the papers containing them upon which the Council will deliberate.

II

In praising the flexibility of the National Security Act earlier, I pointed to the Council's different use under Truman and under Eisenhower. This flexibility is also well illustrated by different utilizations of the Council by President Eisenhower himself. During his first two years in office, it was necessary to pick up and reexamine all the policies of the prior Administration which were still in effect at Inauguration Day. Were these policy directives still adequate and proper? If not, how should they be changed? This heavy load of reëxamination and often of restatement had

to be carried simultaneously with the performance of exacting tasks in three other rings under the Big Tent. We were continually examining over-all national security policy; we were making recurring assessment and appraisal (as called for by the Statute) of "the objectives, commitments, and risks of the United States in relation to our actual and potential military power;" and we were coping with the day-to-day crises and issues which are created as history evolves. Such a swelling volume of work required those 115 Council meetings during the first 115 weeks of this Administration.

But there came a time, following the end of its second year in office, when this Administration had accumulated a reservoir of basic policies and forward strategy. Mr. Anderson, in his *Atlantic* article, pointed out that these policies, "though not inflexible and always subject to constant review and revision from time to time, nevertheless [did] represent certain fundamental concepts and . . . identified guidelines for those departments in Government which are responsible for action." Against this background, it was possible for the Council to enter its second phase under Eisenhower. There would be less driving pressure; more time would be made free for discussion. The President looked forward to this second phase, not as a change of road, but as a turn in the same road and as an alteration in pace.

Soon after the second phase began, the President's illness occurred. For two months he was not in a position to preside over a Council meeting. But the Council continued to function during his Colorado vacation and his later illness, holding during these three and one-half months ten meetings, with the Vice President in the chair. The reservoir of accumulated policy guidance then stood the nation in good stead. Mr. Anderson puts it thus: "The heads of the various departments are in a position to carry on during such times with full knowledge of the continued validity of the broad policy concepts established by the President in the cumulative experience of the NSC. . . . The continued functioning of Government in such periods under a body of established policy exemplifies, in a real sense, the principle which John Adams wrote into the Massachusetts Constitution in 1780—that ours is a Government of laws and not of men."

When the Eisenhower Administration took office in January 1953, the Council was relatively young. For this reason, it was possible to mould its procedures to accommodate a maximum

work-load and effective performance. Thus, a regular meeting day and hour (Thursdays at 10 in the morning) was early established so as to free a period in each future week from interference of other engagements. Likewise, a "forward" agenda was circulated weekly by the Special Assistant, with topics frequently scheduled months ahead in order to allow thorough, orderly study and preparation in the responsible agencies and then in the Planning Board. Again, there were circulated, well in advance of each Council meeting, a detailed agenda for that meeting and copies of the policy recommendations to be taken up under the respective items.

Except for a current intelligence briefing, which opened each Council meeting, and for occasional emergency items for which there was little or even no time for advance preparation, items were presented for Council deliberation on the basis of carefully staffed and carefully written documents. For convenience, a routine format for policy statements was developed. Thus, the busy reader would always know where to find the covering letter, the general considerations, the objectives, the courses of action to carry out the objectives, the financial appendices, the supporting staff study; for they invariably appeared in this sequence in the final document. Lastly, immediately after each Council meeting, the Special Assistant was responsible for drafting a brief record of action, summarizing what had taken place at the meeting; and, to obtain the benefit of the views of those who attended the meeting, circulated the draft to them before submitting it to the President. The record of action is a critically important document. When approved by the President, as presented to or as modified by him, it records the policy of the United States on the matters covered therein.

The standardization of these techniques made it possible for the Council to transact, week in and week out, an enormously heavy load of work.

The Cabinet also began gradually to change its character. At the outset, its loose informality stood in frank contrast to the Council operation, but it was soon found that many things were getting discussed at Cabinet meetings but not getting settled. With characteristic impulse to make any operation related to him as useful and effective as possible, President Eisenhower set about to reform Cabinet procedures. The Cabinet began to step away from an easygoing debating society toward an advisory

body addressing itself to precise points. On its horizon, there appeared: a Cabinet Secretary; a pre-meeting agenda; advance circulation of papers to be discussed, presented in a standard format; meetings of representatives of the Cabinet members with the Cabinet Secretary; a post-meeting statement of decisions taken. The influence of the young brother, the Council, upon the operating procedures of the Cabinet has been striking and beneficial. I have stressed these operational aspects of the Council and their gradual infection of the ancient Cabinet's procedure because they have far-reaching effect.

The effective integration of all germane considerations bearing on a particular policy issue *requires* that the presentation of it to and discussions by the Council shall be on the basis of carefully staffed papers, prepared through a representative, searching procedure such as is now carried on by the Council's Planning Board. A principal danger at the top level of government is that the required discussion may be based on a presentation that is one-sided (however earnestly proposed) or that lacks a critical analysis in which all agencies freely participate at the formative stage. The complexity and variety of the agenda items presented at a single Council meeting underline the risk which may attend decisions based on inadequate, nonrepresentative preparation or on the failure of participants to have studied and grasped the material prepared for their advance consideration. Without adequate preparation, few men have the over-all perspective to deal with long-range security issues.

Of course, disadvantages attend the method of continuous presentation through carefully staffed papers. There is a tendency toward formality and stylization. There is eliminated the informal "kicking about" of a problem at the Council meeting. But these disadvantages are more than offset by the likelihood that a more sure, decisive result will be achieved when considerations are based on an exactly prepared and commonly understood statement of facts and recommendations. There is no question whatsoever in my mind that policy action is profitable when it is based on precisely worded, carefully studied and well presented written material. A goal of the Council under the present Administration is to achieve this type of operation.

When such a goal is achieved, the President has a working mechanism from which to obtain carefully integrated and representative advice. He also has in the Council an admirable refuge

from one-sided pressure to decide some issue. An *ex parte* presentation may or may not present all the facts. An omission may come from ignorance or inadvertence or it may be partisan. But at the Council table all sides are present. Here, together in give-and-take argument, are the President's principal advisers, stating their views before each other and before the President, upon whom rests the burden of decision; questioning and being questioned; each having his free, full opportunity to speak before the die is cast. This kind of thing seems to me the quintessence of democracy in action, admirably suited to the genius of our free institutions.

It may be appropriate here to describe the functioning of another part of the N.S.C. mechanism—the Operations Coördinating Board, created by Executive Order in 1953. The O.C.B. arose like a phoenix out of the ashes of the old Psychological Strategy Board. The old Board had been premised on the fallacious concept of an independently-existing psychological strategy; whereas, in fact, it is the significant actions taken by government in and of themselves, the appropriate and most desirable arrangement of such actions, and the manner and emphasis of the publication of such actions to the world, that advance the struggle for men's minds and create a desirable climate of world opinion. The Jackson Committee was unanimous in recommending a subaltern agency which would strive, not for more or for independent planning, but for better dovetailing of the programs of the departments and agencies responsible for carrying out approved national security policies.

It was for such a coördinative purpose that the O.C.B. was created. Assume that the National Security Council sits at the top of Policy Hill. On one side of this hill, policy recommendations travel upward through the Planning Board to the Council, where they are thrashed out and submitted to the President. When the President has approved a policy recommendation, it travels down the other side of Policy Hill to the departments and agencies responsible for its execution. Each department or agency with a function to perform under such approved policy must prepare its program to carry out its responsibility. Part way down this side of the hill is the Operations Coördinating Board, to which the President refers an approved national security policy as its authority to advise with the relevant departments and agencies as to their detailed operational planning and as to coördinating the

interdepartmental aspects of their respective programs. In no sense is the O.C.B. concerned with the making of policy. While it cannot make or negate programs to carry out a policy, it may assist in developing them. The Board is a coördinator and an expediter and a follower-up and a progress reporter. It is also authorized to initiate new proposals for action within the framework of national security policies.

It is apparent why the O.C.B. must have such functions and not the control of policy. I have seen it erroneously called the Operations *Control* Board. Its membership consists of the Under Secretary of State, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, the Director of Central Intelligence, and certain others. Such officers are obviously without authority, individually or collectively, to interpose their views between the President and his responsible Cabinet members. The O.C.B. can assist, follow up, report; but it cannot initiate or change policy. And the language of the Executive Order is scrupulously exact to this effect.

It is true that the personalities, capacities and philosophies of those who compose the Operations Coördinating Board affect its transaction of business. But a similar comment is equally applicable to all human undertakings. As I have earlier remarked, the best functioning of the Planning Board depends upon its members' capabilities, brilliance of mind, soundness of judgment and devotion to princple. The O.C.B. is still the youngest part of the N.S.C. mechanism. It is intended to fill a vital rôle: to help "set the stage" by encouraging the most favorable arrangement of department and agency plans to carry out an approved security policy, so as to make the ultimate execution of that policy as effective a step as the United States can take in the area.

The question is often asked of me: Whence come the ideas for policy studies leading to recommendations by the Council? What is the genesis of a national security policy? The answer is as various as the world around us, as the events of today which go to make tomorrow the book of history. But one may divide the spectrum as follows.

At the one end is the mass of national security policies which had been approved under the Truman Administration. When President Eisenhower took office, there were something like a hundred national security policy statements in effect: some recent, some a year or so old, some (of a more administrative nature) dating back to early Council actions; some basic and world-

wide, some dealing with regions or countries, some dealing with specific undertakings or relations or defensive elements; some as big as whales, some as tiny as minnows (but extremely sensitive minnows). As I have already pointed out, it was necessary for the new Administration to review as rapidly as possible *all* of these policies in accordance with their importance and the availability of time. In what ways should they be changed, modified, strengthened or superseded? This review naturally generated many ideas for new or changed national security policies.

Moving farther along the spectrum, we find the continuing review of *all* policies, including those approved by President Eisenhower. A national security policy is not created to be put in a glass museum case. As world events shift or take on new emphasis under more recent intelligence reports, there is need to subject policies to a fresh look. Periodically the Operations Coördinating Board reports to the Council on departmental and agency progress in carrying out currently operative national security policies, on its judgment of the adequacy or failings of such policies. In a few instances such progress reports are made by a responsible department or agency. These progress reports, which turn up at almost every Council meeting, provide another source of ideas for change or modification in policy. In addition, certain departments and agencies file annual reports with the Council indicating the current status of programs to carry out national security policies for which they have responsibility. These status of programs reports are a mine of information that may stimulate questioning.

The fluidity of the world we live in is paralleled by the continuous processes of the Council mechanism to keep its policy guidance responsive and up to date. Thus in the first three years of the Eisenhower Administration various basic and embracing policies of the United States, and policies affecting diverse areas of government, were annually under consideration as to one or more or all their phases.

Still further down this imagined spectrum is an area where history takes charge of the development of policy. A foreign leader dies; a war ends; a conference succeeds or fails; an ally makes a new and unexpected decision. There is no Cassandra to prophesy in advance that the consequent issue must be scheduled for Council consideration. Out of the unrolling of events gush forth the ideas, in fact often the urgent demands, for the formation or re-

formation of security policy. It is in these frequently exigent circumstances that the value of the Council mechanism is perhaps best demonstrated. For it is possible to summon the Planning Board by telephone into almost continuous session for several long days before a Council meeting in order to bring integrated study and debate to bear on the intelligence and other resources pooled by the Board's participating departments and agencies. Day-to-day happenings in sensitive areas may call for constant and immediate testing of basic policies.

At the other end of this spectrum of ideas lies an area of comparative calm. The responsible departments and agencies, peering ahead, generate ideas, studies, questions for scheduling on the forward agenda of the Council. The agencies do not always agree on the timing or the priority of their ideas. It is for the Special Assistant, who has charge of the forward agenda for the President, to fit into the problems that crowd the Council docket one more that may seem entitled to admission.

The idea does not always come from a department or agency. In my own experience as Special Assistant, ideas have come direct from the President, out of his own rumination or out of some conference or outside communication; ideas have grown out of discussions in the Council or sometimes in Cabinet meetings; ideas have germinated in Planning Board discussions, perhaps on some other subject; ideas have come from an important official in the government. The source of the idea, if it is a good one, is not of consequence. It is the *idea* itself that counts.

What I have written above is not intended to create an impression that the National Security Council mechanism cannot be further strengthened and fortified. On the contrary, though much has been done, much remains to do. I march under the banner of Heraclitus—the only thing that is permanent is change. The Council operation which I have described will no doubt change; it can and will be improved.

Let us consider two recommendations for change in the Council mechanism, which have been frequently advanced to improve and strengthen its operations. One concerns the membership of the Council. The other concerns its permanent staff.

III

As stated above, the statutory members of the Council are the President, the Vice President, the Secretary of State, the Secre-

tary of Defense, the Director of the Office of Defense Mobilization. Who else should participate directly at the Council table and be represented in all the lower echelons of the Council mechanism through which pass the proposed policy recommendations that ultimately reach the President?

The President, in recognition of the essential part which a strong domestic economy plays in the survival of our free world, has added to the five statutory members, as regular Council attendants, the Secretary of the Treasury and the Director of the Budget. Upon terminating the Foreign Operations Administration, the Director of which had been a statutory member of the Council, the President continued Governor Stassen, whom he had appointed his Special Assistant for Disarmament, in regular attendance. Also, there come to all Council meetings, in an advisory capacity, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Director of Central Intelligence. There are also usually present the Special Assistant for Foreign Economic Policy and the Director of the U. S. Information Agency as observers. Finally, there always come the Special Assistant for National Security Affairs and his aides, the Council's Executive Secretary and Deputy Executive Secretary. In addition to the 15 persons whom I have enumerated, there are invited the head or heads of other departments and agencies which have responsibilities or interests relating to a particular agenda item. Thus, the most frequent additional ad hoc participants in Council deliberations are Admiral Strauss with respect to atomic energy, the Attorney General on matters of internal security, the Federal Civil Defense Administrator, the Secretaries and Chiefs of Staff of the Military Services, the Ambassador to the United Nations and the Secretary of Commerce on matters involving foreign trade.

The mere recapitulation of these numbers illustrates what was perhaps my most difficult and constant problem while in Washington. There is a universal desire to attend Council meetings. I do not ever recall an invitation being refused. On the contrary, there are many who strongly feel a need, if not a right, to attend. But there is a nice balance to be preserved. That is the balance between an attendance which will permit intimate, frank, fruitful discussion and an attendance which turns the group into a "town meeting." President Eisenhower is insistent that Council meetings shall be, *in fact,* a forum for vigorous, searching discussion as precursor to clear, incisive policy recommendations to him. Professor

Edward Warren of the Harvard Law School used to teach his students that the "powwow element" of a meeting was invaluable. That element disappears when more than a certain number of persons sit about the Council table. Once this invisible line is passed, people do not discuss and debate; they remain silent or talk for the record. A restriction in the number who attend is less for security reasons than to make the Council into the valuable device which President Eisenhower intends that it shall be.

Should there, then, be more than 15 to 20 persons participating at the Council table? A recommendation has frequently been advanced that the Council would be strengthened by adding to its membership some qualified "civilians" who would be free of departmental responsibilities. In using the term "civilians," I do not do so in contrast to military personnel but as a short-cut expression for "persons not holding federal governmental office"—too mouthfilling a phrase to repeat each time.

The argument in favor of civilian Council members runs as follows: A few wise men, of broad gauge, divorced from the enormous administrative burdens carried by Cabinet members, would have time to think and to contribute a quality of guidance now believed by some to be lacking in the Council. This recommendation has been pressed by men far wiser than I, and it certainly merits—and has received—very serious consideration.

I have consistently opposed the concept that the Council would be benefited by including in its *regular* membership a small number of highly qualified civilians who are divorced from the responsibility of operating a department or agency. My opposition runs deeper than the increased number of persons at the Council table. By hypothesis, these men would be elder statesmen, "Nestors." I am fearful that the view of these Nestors would tend to be theoretical, because their views would not be tested by the responsible daily contact which a department head has with marching events and with the practicability of actions to cope with them. Furthermore, such views, because of the intellectual brilliance and "free time to think" of their sponsors, might tend to dominate the Council discussions.

Let me pinpoint what I think to be the essential virtue of the Security Council. It is that this procedure brings to the President the views of the very officials upon whom he will later rely to carry out his national security policy decisions.

While I reject the idea of civilian members of the Council in

regular weekly attendance, I have always favored seeking "outside" advice and counsel through the appointment of civilians, on an ad hoc consultant basis, as advisors to the Council. While I was Special Assistant, we used such consultants on a considerable number of occasions, either with reference to basic policy or with reference to some special policy issue. These men in no sense represented special interests. They were carefully selected because of broad and diverse backgrounds of experience and as representative of segments of our country, both in terms of geographic location and individual occupations.

In deciding whether or not to use civilian consultants to the Council at a given moment and on a given subject three considerations must be weighed. 1. Is the time which will be consumed in educating them for their task and in obtaining for them the necessary top security clearances worth what may be the product of their labors? The briefing of such topflight people cannot be left to underlings. The cramped time-schedule of the top men in government must be invaded for the education of the consultants. Such demands on already overburdened officials may create more difficulties than the consultants' services could contribute. 2. How much damage to morale results from the employment, at the apex level, of expert "outsiders" who look over the shoulders and breathe down the necks of extremely busy officials charged with responsibility to the President for performance? 3. Will the views of a person, not informed by operating, departmental responsibilities, be sufficiently realistic to carry weight?

It is my opinion, on balance, that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages where the consultant's task is either a specific matter as to which he is particularly qualified or a general subject as to which his general knowledge, geographic location and occupational experience may well provide a useful contribution. This result may flow either from consultants acting as a group or committee or in certain cases as individuals.

The civilian consultant is, of course, not an executive in any sense. The things which he recommends may not be adopted or promptly acted upon by the executive branch. The mills of the federal government grind mighty slow. But the civilian consultant may well recall the ancient story of the princess who could not sleep because someone had placed a small pea under the mattress.

Would it be wise for each administration to develop a panel of

civilian consultants? Under such a procedure, all members of the panel could be simultaneously cleared for security; and thereafter all would be available, as needed, for ad hoc limited service. Because the call would be for service limited in time, persons holding responsible civilian positions would feel able to serve on the panel. It should be possible to keep such a panel reasonably up to date on secret and sensitive information and intelligence necessary for effective performance when the members are called to duty. But there is at least one obvious disadvantage to such a procedure: the difficulty of selecting in advance, for such a panel, members who will be capable of handling the special and wholly unpredictable problems that may arise in future time.

IV

The National Security Council, as the top mechanism of government for aiding in the formulation of security policy, has a policy-planning function and a supporting-staff function.

The policy-planning function should be exercised through the Council itself and through its Planning Board, composed of top-flight personnel appointed by the President from the departments and agencies represented at the Council table. The Special Assistant for National Security Affairs is appointed by the President to insure that his views as to policy-planning are carried out. To that end, the Special Assistant presides over the Planning Board, acts as executive officer at Council meetings and is responsible to the President for operating the Council mechanism. The Special Assistant is a part of the Administration in power and should change as the Administration changes.

The supporting-staff function should be exercised through a high-calibre, permanent Council staff, not subject to change with political change. This permanent staff should consist of necessary administrative and secretarial personnel and also of what I call "think people." At present the permanent staff consists of 28 persons, of whom 11 are "think people." For the last six years the Council has been fortunate in having the same person as Executive Secretary, a man of keen, analytical intelligence and impeccable nonpartisanship. He, his deputy and the other nine "think people" on the staff are scrupulously non-political and non-policy-making. They form the backbone of continuity, the reservoir of past knowledge and the staff assistance required by the Special Assistant in discharging his responsibilities to the President. Each

of them is assigned one or more specific tasks by the Special Assistant, but their principal task is to help him to cope with the inundating flood of papers that must be read, analyzed, dissected, digested, kept abreast of and channelled.

The separation of functions which I have just described is the development of the recommendations which I presented to President Eisenhower in March 1953, following a study made at his request as to how to make the N.S.C. mechanism more capable of carrying out effectively its statutory charter. My recommendations were derived from that study, from my service as a member of the Senior Staff (as the Planning Board used to be called) in 1951 and from my experience in operating the Council mechanism at high speed after January 20, 1953.

My study raised certain points upon which the views of those with whom I talked were not in entire agreement. One of these points was a suggestion that the permanent staff be increased by a considerable number. The increase upon which I settled, and to which the President agreed, was to add to the permanent staff a much smaller number: an increase of three "think people," scarcely an equivalent of the tripled work-load and tripled momentum.

Underlying some of the suggestions for increasing the staff lurks a difference in concept of the staff's place in the scheme of things from that which I have described above. The report of the Hoover Commission's Task Force on Military Procurement, June 1955, touched upon the Council mechanism. In the dissenting view of one Task Force member—for the majority report did not espouse this view—an increased staff was suggested to "evolve policy ideas for consideration of the Special Assistant and the N.S.C." Such a concept is obviously alien to that which I recommended to the President, in which I most heartily believe, and which is currently being practised. Under present practice, the policy-planning function is wholly reserved to the Council and to the Planning Board. The Planning Board members, like their chiefs on the Council itself, are dual personalities. They represent their respective agencies; but, in line with the President's concept of the Council, they are also members of an integrated body working up integrated policy recommendations for the Council to submit to the President. Distinct from such policy-planning is the work of the Council staff. This body furnishes the Special Assistant with administrative and analytical support in day-to-day opera-

tions. It analyzes, summarizes and probes, from an unbiased point of view, the work produced in the departments and agencies concerned with a particular issue.

Now I conceive that a democracy draws greatest strength from the participation in the making of policies of those who are charged with responsibility for executing those policies. Therefore, I believe it fundamentally sound that the responsible departments and agencies of the Executive Branch should be the ones to carry the burden through the Planning Board of working on the formulation of policy recommendations.

An increased permanent staff, given an originating concern with the substance of national security policy, would, by reason of its location at the apex of government, drift into becoming itself a policy-maker. Because such a staff is divorced from operating responsibility, its product would tend less to reflect the hard realities of the field and more to speak in aloof theory. Since the Special Assistant has direct access to the President, an N.S.C. staff operation of the kind suggested would tend to intervene between the President and his Cabinet members, who are responsible to him for executing his policies. Grave damage could be done to our form of government were there an interruption in the line of responsibility from the President to his Cabinet.

The complex problems of national security require constantly informed analytical research. This quality can best be realized by the use of specially qualified groups, drawn from the operating departments and agencies and also from outside of government on a project-by-project basis. I do not think that an "outside" research organization permanently attached to the Council—even if it had a broad background and specialized talents—would be as well qualified to conduct the study and research required on each of the many and varied problems of national security. Those who are indoctrinated by the hard realities of actual, daily operations can make the soundest contribution to policy formulation.

An increased N.S.C. staff, however large or well-qualified, would not be able to settle certain basic problems which underlie the conduct of the federal government: the integration of still competing services into the Defense Department; the agreement by independent Chiefs of Staff upon strategic defense plans in the light of the advent of thermonuclear weapons; the jealousies and jurisdictional disputes which inevitably thrive at various governmental levels and which tend to perpetuate the existence

of presently assigned functions; the "human equation" among the President's advisers; the requirement that people at the top of government frequently must make crucial decisions with great speed based on their background, common sense and operating responsibility.

For the foregoing reasons, I have opposed the interposition at the apex of government, responsive to the President's Special Assistant, of a large staff which would concern itself with the formulation of national security policy. The Special Assistant may need a few more staff assistants; each Special Assistant will carry his towering burden of work in his own way. But I would think it inadvisable formally to give him greater responsibilities or formally to increase his functional prestige. His existing power to speak for the President is all that any servant needs or should seek. Furthermore, the larger the staff, in connection with policy-making, the more work it makes for itself and the less work it does for its chief. A better way is to draw on the wealth of resources in the interested departments and agencies, bringing them toward rather than separating them from the hub of the wheel. Thus, in that time when the wheel must bear its burden, the spokes are stronger because of this participation in their fashioning.

In an incredibly short time, the National Security Council has assumed a permanent rôle in the executive branch of the federal government. As the Cabinet has developed through the decades, so the Council will continue to develop. Other Presidents may further vary its uses, and doubtless will. The technique is still in evolution, but the imprint of what the Council can do to help the Chief Executive has already been made. Through a long future, the National Security Council and the Cabinet will be twin channels through which policy recommendations flow to the President. It was President Eisenhower who built the Council into a well-proportioned structure of substance and strength. It was my fortunate duty to hold the spikes, but it was he who drove them home with his big hammer.